

61 Mech Monthly

61 Mech Veterans Association

61 Meg Maandeliks

61 Meg Veterane Vereniging



August 2024



Strategic Management Process

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Message from the 61 MVA Patron Brig Genl Kobus Smit (Aft / Ret)

The Vision of the 61 Mechanised Battalion Group Veterans Association is to treasure, safeguard and promote the exceptional miliary heritage of 61 Mechanised Battalion Group to the benefit of the former members of the unit, the miliary history and the community in general.

The mission is to provide a voluntary haven for its members, as well as interested persons and parties to promote and renew comradeship, to strengthen bonds amongst veterans, the safeguarding of their heritage and traditions and the rendering of national support amongst the members.

The Patron is appointed by the Executive Committee, preferably an ex-commander who oversees the activities of the association and advise, provide guidance, participate and represent the Association on operational, heritage, ceremonial and related matters/occasions.

During the AGM and Memorial Service held on 17 August 2024, my appointment as Patron and election as Chairperson of the Board of Directors was endorsed.

We must accept the reality that the association is an aging organization and secondly that many initiatives evolve over time, just to mention two: The Born in 61 Mech Movement and the establishment of functional groupings additional to regional structures.

As Patron I publicly pledged my allegiance to the mission, vision and constitution of the association during the AGM and the ceremonial handover between myself and Col Gert van Zyl took place as part of the memorial service.

As Patron and Chairperson of the Association I will endeavor to:

*Serve diligently for the next 4-years unless (health dependent)
Pursue the “Quest for Longevity”
Cement the role and functions of the Board of Directors.
Formalize the Strategic Management Process.*

Signed: Brig Genl Kobus Smit (Aft / Ret)

Verslag – Beskermheer – Kol (Aft) Gert van Zyl, SM, MMM

Saterdag 17 Augustus 2024

Dit is vandag vir my 'n besonderse voorreg om namens die Beskermheer en die lede van die Uitvoerende Bestuur vir die termyn 2018 tot 2024, hierdie verslag van aktiwiteite aan u voor te hou.

Met die stigting van die 61 Mech Veterane Vereniging in 2008 is daar in die Grondwet ingeskryf dat daar vanuit (verkieslik) die oud-Bevelvoerders van die 61 Mech Bataljon Groep 'n Beskermheer aangestel moet word.

Die take van die Beskermheer is onder andere om toe te sien dat die etos en grondwet deur die lede gehandhaaf word en dat hy ook as adviseur vir die Uitvoerende komitee sal dien vir strategiese beplanning en behulpsaam wees met die uitvoering daarvan.

Dit was vir my 'n groot eer toe ek in 2018 gevra is om die 3de Beskermheer van die Vereniging te word. Sedertdien het ons Vereniging en ons land deur geweldige moeilike tye gegaan. Die Covid-19 pandemie het wêreldwyd alles tot stilstand gebring. Dit het geweldige druk op elke individu geplaas om metodes te kry om te kon oorleef en om weer na die beëindiging van die inperking, die wiel weer aan die rol te kry. In dié tyd het ons as Vereniging egter die geleentheid gebruik om verskeie projekte van stapel te stuur. Hierdie projekte sluit in:

- Die Buddy Fonds (Makkerhulpfonds} is tot stand te bring. Dit het ons in staat gestel om 10-talle oud 61 Mech Veterane oor hierdie moeilike tydperk van kos op hulle tafels te voorsien.
- In 2020 is daar begin om sommige van die belangrike Operasies waarin die 61 Mech Bataljon Groep aan deelgeneem het, in kleiner boekformate te begin publiseer. Die eerste drie publikasies tewete Smokeshell, Ops Protea en Ops Askari het reeds die lig gesien en dit gaan weer binnekort 'n herdruk fase in.
- In dieselfde tyd is daar reeds begin met twee nuwe boeke naamlik Operasie Hooper met al die kleiner Operasies daar rondom saamgevat asook 'n boek oor Operasie Merlyn. Die twee boeke behoort later vanjaar die lig te sien.

- In die verslag termyn is daar verskeie amptelike 61 Mech Slagveld toere na Angola onderneem. Die toere het plaasgevind in 2018, 2019, 2022, 2023 en die laaste een was 'n toer in Junie vanjaar deur die 61 Riders wat dit die eerste motorfiets alleen toer gemaak het.
- Met die baie geslaagde toer van 2018, waartydens lede van die Angolese Regering en hulle Weermag direk betrokke was by die toer, is hulle genooi na ons 2018 Gedenkdiens en Parade wat daardie jaar op 18 Augustus plaasgevind het. Die lede wat teenwoordig was, was General Fernando Mateus wat self in sy jongdae teen die SAW in skermutselings betrokke was, en ook senior lede van die Cuando Cubango Provincie. Hierdie skakeling het baie bygedra om 'n wedersydse respek en vriendskapsbande met mekaar te smee.
- In een van die belangrikste projekte nog het die 61 Mech VV Bestuur al die oud-bevelvoerders van 61 Mech aan die begin van 2023 genader om by hulle die groen lig te kry om die gesogde Bedrewenheidskenteken, die Geel Messie, te laat toeken aan elke lid wat sedert Ops Sceptic en vroeër deel van die 61 Mech Operasies was, te laat toeken. So is daar reeds talle ou-lede wat hulle Geel Messies amptelik tydens parades ontvang het.

Die Kuratorskap van die Geel Messie is amptelik deur die Hoof van die SANDF aan die 61 Mech Veterane vereniging toegeken.

- In dieselfde termyn het die lede van die 61 Mech VV Bestuur besef dat hulle mede-soldate wat tydens amptelike Operasies gesneuwel het, nooit die voorreg gehad het om hulle Bedrewenheidskenteken, die Geel Messie, te kon ontvang nie. Voortspruitend hieruit is die ou-Bevelvoerders weer genader en toestemming is van hulle ontvang om die familie en/of naaste vriende op te spoor om dan die gestorwe lid se Geel Messie Postuum aan hulle te oorhandig. Daar is tot op datum 17 sulke toekennings gemaak. Ons het die groot eer en voorreg om later vandag aan nog 4 lede se familie/vriende hulle Geel Messies Postuum toe te ken.

Ek wil my dank uitspreek teenoor elke lid van die Uitvoerende komitee wat oor die afgelope 6 jaar baie ure en harde werk ingesit het om die bal in die lug te hou. Ek wil hulle graag by die naam noem:
het wel turke en die doopfee doen dat vrylik soos die voorreling
 Johan Booyens (Nasionale Voorsitter) *afgesien van hulle onderskeel begeer*
wat hulle ook moet beoefen.

Kevin West

Manus Myburgh

Jaap Steyn

Fanus Hansen

Robbert Torrani

Dit was 'n besonderse voorreg om saam met hulle te kon dien.

Ons betree nou 'n nuwe era in ons geskiedenis waar ons moet aanpas in 'n nuwe wêreld. In ons Vereniging word die aflos stokkie ook aangegee na nuwe lede van die Uitvoerende komitee wat moet help om ons op koers te hou. Dit is ook tyd dat ek die posisie van Beskermheer moet oorplaas op die juk van ons 5de Bevelvoerder van die Bataljon Groep, Brig Genl (Aft) Kobus Smit, SM, MMM. Hy neem vandag tydens die Jaarlikse Gedenkdiens en Parade die leisels by my oor. Ek is oortuig daarvan dat Genl Smit 'n nuwe dimensie aan die rol van die Beskermheer sal bring.

Aan die nuwe Beskermheer, die nuwe lede van die Uitvoerende Komitee en die lede van ons Vereniging, wil ek alles van die beste toewens. Mag julle elkeen saam bou aan 'n trotse nalatenskap wat die naam van die 61 Mech Bataljon Groep op almal se lippe sal hou.

Algemene Jaarvergadering

61 MVV

17 Augustus 2024

Activities of the National AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM are dealt with.

The Patron delivers his report relating to matters that received attention of the ExCom, and the progress made by the Association since the previous AGM. The Patron must submit the Patron's Report in writing to the Secretary for inclusion in the minutes of the AGM.

Copies of the audited financial statements, and of any fund raising projects, are tabled for discussion and approval.

All the points for discussion, with regard to which the ExCom gave written notification, by means of the agenda, are tabled.

All points for discussion are included into the agenda subject to the fourteen day written notification.

Additional points for discussion are not allowed at an AGM, either at National level or Combat Team.

The election of the office bearers, subject to the provision defined elsewhere in this Constitution.

Attendance

Physical

Graham Dickson, Gert Minnaar, Gert van Zyl, Kobus Smit, Andrew Whitaker, Jan Malan, Fred Burger, Lawrence Smith, Louis Buys, Marco Caforio, Attie van Niekerk, Johannes Els, Deon Jordaan, Andre Schlemmer, Gert Deysel, Werner Lotter, Jasper Cloete, Johan Kooij, Kobus Kemp, Arie Kemp, Jaap Steyn, Neels van Heerden, Marlene Whitaker, Manus Myburgh, Marius Engelbrecht

Via Zoom

Mourie v/d Bijl, Paul Louw, Mike Bond, Michael Luyts, Hannes Lombard, Ray van Zanten, Roelof Fourie, Brian James, Anthony Turton, Gerard Van Rooyen, Ben Smit, Dawid Lotter, Martiens v/d Merwe, Jannie Nieuwoudt and three other.



Brig Genl Kobus Smit (Ret / Aft)



Algemene Jaarvergadering van die 61 Mech Veterane Vereniging

Saterdag 17 Augustus 2024 om 08:00

by die Ditsong Museum vir Militêre Geskiedenis, Saxonwold, Johannesburg

AGENDA

1. Opening en Verwelkoming
 - a. Teenwoordigheidsregister
 - b. Verskonings
 - c. Notule van AJV gehou op Saterdag 19 Augustus 2023
 - d. Sake voortspruitend
2. VERSLAG FJ 2023/24
 - a. Beskermheerverslag
 - b. Finansiële Verslag
 - i. Struktuur vir verslagdoening
 - ii. Voorlegging van Finansiële Bestuurstate
 - iii. Ledegelde
 - c. Kommunikasie
 - i. Nuwe Webblad
 - ii. Sosiale Media – Lede en nie-lede
 - iii. Nuwe kommunikasie strukture
 - d. Projekte
 - e. Skouerskure

DOELSTELLINGS VIR FY 24/25 EN DIE MEDIUM TERMYN

3. Nuwe struktuur van die Vereniging
 - a. Voorlegging van die voorgestelde bestuurstruktuur.
 - b. Hoe orde program vir die FY 2024/25.
 - c. Veranderinge aan Grondwet
 - i. Rasionaal vir die wysiging and die Grondwet
 - ii. Uitnodiging om insette te lewer tot the regulatoriese raamwerk
 - d. Verkiesing
 - i. Direkteure
 - ii. Uitvoerende Komitee.
4. Afsluiting



Jaarlikse Gedenkparade

Ditsong 17 Augustus 2024



Kpln Pieter Bezuidenhout

This unit comprised of various elements grouped together from other arms and units within the biggest Defence Community as well as supporting arms units. The fact that the central doctrine dictated and regulated the droves of integrated arms down to platoon and troop level, created a special sense of cooperation, mutual respect and independence, receiving the 61 proficiency badge, denoting your participation in operations as a member of unit, installed a pride and a visible recognition that created a special band of brothers in arms among the members of the association with an elevated level of awareness of each other's needs, especially in the social and physical demands. It is also important to remember that this unit existed for 27 years, and it acted operationally within the South-West Africa Border War, but after that, it would also participate in operations internal in South Africa.



Master of Ceremony - Harry van Staden

Excerpts and Paraphrases from the speech by Maj Genl L Smith (Aft / Ret)

Since its inception, 61 Mech built a reputation as a formidable force and always full part of the major offensive and pre-emptive operations conducted mostly in southern Angola. It is difficult to express and explain why such peculiar level of camaraderie amongst its members became a trademark of the unit.

My personal feeling is that its foundation was in the high level of common discipline in the unit, achieved through excellent training, shared hardships during operations and training, and then also another aspect was the unusual high level of esprit de corps in the unit.



61 MECH VETERANS ASSOCIATION

GEDENKDIENS / MEMORIAL SERVICE

(Ditsong Nasionale Museum vir Militêre Geskiedenis / Ditsong National Museum for Military History)

17 Augustus / August 2024

PROGRAM / PROGRAMME

07h30 Hys van vlae / Hoisting of flags
61 Meg uitstalling oop vir besigtiging / 61 Mech display open to view

08h00 61 Mech Algemene Jaarvergadering - Ouditorium /
61 Mech Annual General Meeting - Auditorium

09h00 Baniere vertoon / Banners displayed

09h45 Gaste neem hul sitplekke in / Guests to be seated

10h00 Veterane tree aan / Veterans form up

Aankoms van Funksionaris / Arrival of Functionary
Genl Maj (Aft/Ret) Lawrence R. Smith, SM, MMM
Generale saluut / General salute
Boodskap / Message

Veterane tree uit / Veterans fall out

Gedenkdiens / Memorial Service: Kpln / Cpln Pieter Bezuidenhout

Laaste Taptoe / Last Post
Twee minute stilte / Two-minute silence
Lui Hind-klok / Sound Hind bell
Oggendsinjaal / Reveille

Klaaglied / Lament

Krans en Kruis legging / Laying of Crosses and Wreaths

Medalje parade en toekennings / Medal parade and presentations

Sing van Volkslied / Singing of the National Anthem

12h00 Verversings / Refreshments

I must especially tell you that during my career, I had a lot of interaction with the unit in its latest years when it was deployed as a reserve, and also training of officers, world officers and engineers at the Army Battle School. One of the interesting things is that if a major under-training didn't know what to decide, the driver would, you know, on the intercom, tell him right from the bottom, listen, this is the plan that has been followed many times by other officers, and please go ahead and do it. Let's get on with the job. So it played a very essential role in its later years in training our officers to the highest standard that was possible.

Members of the association and leadership took steps to collect, assemble, and arrange various artefacts in memorabilia, reflecting the proud history and heritage of the unit. Securing a prominent place here at the National Museum of Military History in Saxonwold was now mean feat. I think our presence here depicts and underlines the key role the unit played in the Bush War. I also applaud the steps taken to protect and ensure the uniqueness of the unit and the association's memorabilia.

An interesting phenomenon is the number of master and PhD thesis research and written by especially foreign students on the role and the impact of the unit on the final outcomes of the war in Southern Africa. It reflects the unit's achievements, it emphasizes the fact that the rest of the world's military experts use it as a model. This can only be ascribed to its excellence in leaders as well as in men. High ground tactics, techniques, and procedures and training to perfect it. The constant high-readiness levels and the availability of mine equipment and lastly that intangible and abstract spirit that lead to a world to fight and win is the key elements that ensure success.

In the past few years, several parents and veterans asked me what we achieved, wasn't it all in vain? No, we made no small contribution to prevent the expansion of communism in Southern Africa and was most probably responsible to break the camel's back.

Lastly, within the national context, we ensured a peaceful transformation in both Namibia and South Africa.

As a nation's voters, we fight the good fight to try and ensure a just and equitable society and to make a difference where we can.

As military patrons, we have unique skill sets and a well-developed sense of duty. In contrast with this, we are confronted with the department of military veterans that are in essence dysfunctional and not able to fulfil its mission, especially regarding military veterans and especially within acceptable time limits. Capacity and system problems are the main causes of these symptoms. The CMVO are using all instruments and influence available and within its power to turn this specific challenge around.

My apologies for closing on a negative note, but the good news is that we have reached bottom and the situation cannot get worse. It can only improve from here.

I would like to conclude with a personal confession. I was privileged to serve as a junior officer at 61 Mechanised Battalion Group. And if there is one thing that changed my career around was my tour of duty at 61. It had a profound effect on the way that I saw my responsibilities as a commander. And it installed in me personally a pride in terms of what you can achieve when you are a good commander. And I tried to strive towards achieving the excellence that I saw in the leaders under which I worked there.

I would like to extend my best wishes to the newly elected members of the management of 61 Mechanised Battalion Group Military Veteran association. I wish you all the best. I am sure that the new direction that is taken and the new approach towards managing will only take what has been done until so far to higher levels and to achieve greater heights.

Best of luck and Godspeed. I thank you.

Maj Genl L Smith (Aft / Ret)

HONOURING OUR FALLEN 61 MECH BROTHERS

Manus Myburgh

61 Mechanised Battalion Group existed for just 27 years, but in that short lifetime it participated in no less than 37 large-scale actions and operations, earning a well-deserved name as one of the finest fighting units in South Africa's military annals.

Since then, until 2005 thousands of soldiers entered and exited the gates of this unit, whether it was at Omuthiya, Rooikop or Lohatla. The 61 Mech veterans who served during all these different periods are now united again as members of the 61 Mech Veterans Association where they treasure the history of this unit and commemorate the memory of their fallen brothers with dignity.

105 soldiers lost their lives serving 61 Mech. With the untimely deaths of these soldiers, they were never awarded the coveted 61 Mech 'Yellow Messie'.

The 61 Mech Veterans Association has reached out to all our living Commanding Officers and asked their permission and blessing to reach out to the families of our fallen brothers and present to them their loved ones 'Yellow Messie' posthumously. 61 Mech Veterans Association is the custodians of the 'Yellow Messie'.

By doing this we as fellow brothers and veterans acknowledge the role that these brothers of ours has played in the history of 61 Mech. With this presentation we would also like to get the loved ones to join us during our yearly Memorial Services where we commemorate the memory of our fallen brothers. They will never be forgotten!

We have designed a symbolic wooden triangle with the 61 Mech Veterans Association emblem embroidered in gold thread plus an origi-

nal 'Yellow Messie' below that. This represents the folded flag that is handed to the next of kin during the funeral of a deceased soldier. The members Number, Name, Rank, date of death and in which Operation the member lost his life is engraved at the bottom of the triangle. This gesture is a symbol from the members of the 61 Mech Veterans Assoc to show their appreciation for or fallen brothers honourable and faithful service to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group and our Country.

During our yearly Memorial Service and Parade, we were honoured with the presence of family members and/or friends of 5 of our fallen heroes.

Col (Ret) Gert van Zyl under who's Patronship this project was started, accompanied by our 1st Patron, Maj Genl (Ret) Johann Dippenaar and our new Patron Brig Genl (Ret) Kobus Smit, awarded the 'Yellow Messie' Posthumously to the following fallen soldiers:

We remember:

76395813BG, Rfn RN 'Danny de Vito'

Rfn De Vito passed away on 10 June 1980 during Operation Sceptic in Southern Angola. The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge was awarded Posthumously to Rfn De Vito. Veteran Marco Caforio, who served with Rfn De Vito during Op Sceptic, received the award on behalf of Mrs de Vito. For the past 44 years Veteran Caforio has been visiting the family and will present the award to Mrs De Vito during his next visit.

76325646BG, RFN AJ Madden

Rfn Madden passed away on 10 June 1980

during Operation Sceptic in Southern Angola. The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge was awarded Posthumously to Rfn Madden. Mr Doug Madden, brother of Rfn Madden, and Bernadette Lloyd, sister of Rfn Madden, received the award on behalf of their family.

78251287BG, Gnr D.J. Loubser

Gunner Loubser was killed on 17 August 1981 during a motor vehicle accident in Northern South-West Africa while serving at the 61 Mechanised Battalion Group. The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge was awarded Posthumously to Gnr Loubser. Ms Susan Celliers, sister of Gnr Loubser and Col (Ret) Dirk Louw, nephew of Gnr Loubser, received the award on behalf of their family.

76543867BG, L/Cpl Colin Watson Kindness

L/Cpl Kindness passed away on 19 May 1983 during Operation Dolfyn in Southern Angola. The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge was awarded Posthumously to L/Cpl Kindness. L/Cpl Kindness's mother Denise and his sister Barbara, now resides in the United States of America. Mrs Shirley Mitchell niece of Mrs Kindness, received the award on their behalf.

84592641BG, L/Cpl M.J. Lecuona

L/Cpl Lecuona passed away on 3 February 1988 during Operation Hooper in Southern Angola. The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge was awarded Posthumously to L/Cpl Lecuona. Mr Leon Lecuona, brother of L/Cpl Lecuona, receive the award on behalf of their family.

A further two presentations were made in Bloemfontein and Pietermaritzburg respectively to two families who could not be present at this year's Memorial.

84269315BG, Cpl JH Kleynhans

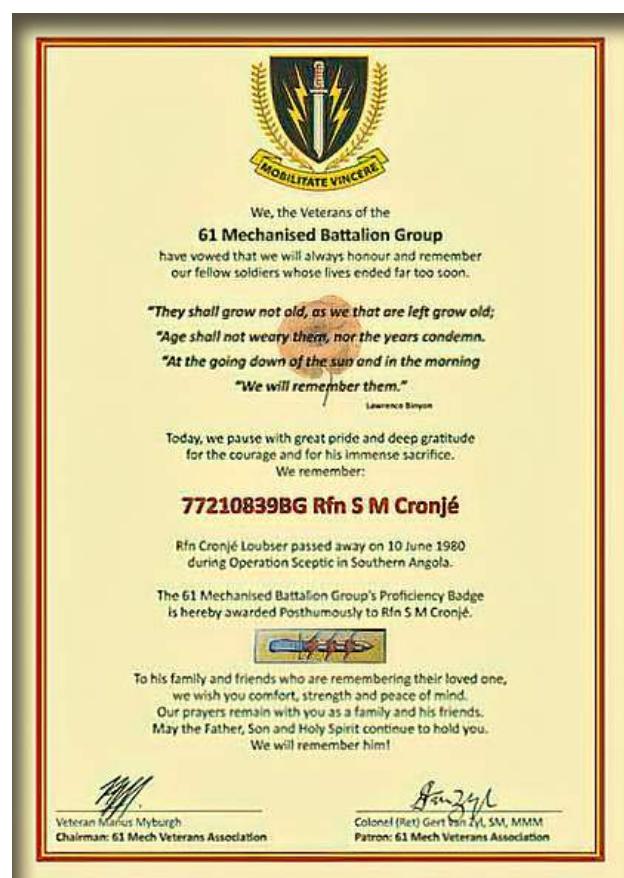
Cpl Kleynhans passed away on 14 February 1988 during Operation Hooper in Southern Angola. The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge was awarded Posthumously to Cpl Kleynhans. Veteran Hannes Lombaard received the award and presented it to the family.

77210839BG, Rfn S M Cronjé

Rfn Cronjé passed away on 10 June 1980 during Operation Sceptic in Southern Angola. The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge was awarded Posthumously to Rfn Cronjé. Veteran Niel Bruwer received the award and will present it to the family.

In just 1 year the 61 Mech Veterans Association has awarded 23 'Yellow Messies' Posthumously to fellow soldiers who paid the highest price while serving their Country. We will continue looking for the families of the other 83 members!

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!





We, the Veterans of the
61 Mechanised Battalion Group

have vowed that we will always honour and remember
our fellow soldiers whose lives ended far too soon.

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."*

Lawrence Binyon

Today, we pause with great pride and deep gratitude
for the courage and for his immense sacrifice.
We remember:

76543867BG L/Cpl Colin Watson Kindness

L/Cpl Kindness passed away on 19 May 1983
during Operation Dolfyn in Southern Angola.

The 61 Mechanised Battalion Group's Proficiency Badge
is hereby awarded Posthumously to L/Cpl C W Kindness.

To his family and friends who are remembering their loved one,
we wish you comfort, strength and peace of mind.
Our prayers remain with you as a family and his friends.
May the Father, Son and Holy Spirit continue to hold you.
We will remember him!

Veteran Manus Myburgh
Chairman: 61 Mech Veterans Association

Colonel (Ret) Gert van Zyl, SM, MMM
Patron: 61 Mech Veterans Association

I am Colin W. Kindness's Mother (Denise Kindness) and I have been in touch with my niece (Shirley Mitchell) who you recently met at the 61 Mechanised Battalion Group Proficiency in Johannesburg. She has sent me a video and a few pictures from the service, which I will cherish forever. It was so great to have received your email, completely out of the blue, after all these years having had no contact whatsoever from the Army. So when we received your email we were so grateful to you and I was so excited to know that you would be setting up the above MEMORIAL and that we would be the receiver of the proficiency badge which will be such a blessing for us to have. Thank you again for contacting us and for awarding this badge posthumously to my son, Colin.

Regards,
Denise Kindness

Jaarlikse Gedenkparade

Wes Kaap 17 Augustus 2024



Wanneer mense ouer raak, dra hulle bril.
Vir die visie, maar ons kyk beter daarsonder.

Ek het gesien met die byeenkoms, die trots van dit wat was. 'n Onsigbare struktuur van kameradie. Mans wat met sigbare trots marsjeer. Die dissipline en trots gemeng met ingekerfde wil, om nog net weer saam te kan marsjeer. Die gees gewillig, maar die vlees het tog tekens van onwilligheid begin toon. Klein, maar daar. Ons kan nie ouerdom ontduik nie, maar die manne het hulle goed van hulle taak gekwyt. Hoofdeksels was eerbiedig afgehaal en eerbiedig aangesit. Diemedaljes prominent blink.

Ek het aan Wouter Basson se lippe gehang en was beindruck met sy briljante strategie. Ek kon sy menswees sien en hoor. Dit het my beindruck meer as sy grade. Salute.

Toe ons begin regkry vir kuier, is almal se hoofdeksels verwyder, figuurlik. Die dop en koek (die bakker onbekend aan my, maar was deur proërs as onverbeterlik, beskryf), was nou eerste op agenda. In die agtergrond het 2 dames, sorgsaam seker gemaak, koffie is beskikbaar. Dankie aan die dames, as koffieholic, was dit 'n

lafenis soos min. Die kuier het begin en toe let ek iets op. Tydens my eerste besoek, het kameradie soos 'n fyn goue draad deur die kuier geloop.

Tydens my tweede besoek, nog 'n tweede fyn goue draad. Die vroue agter die mans. Bankvas. Hulle skarrel in die agtergrond rond om reëlings te tref sodat almal kon eet. Weer lig ek die innerlike hoofdeksel, uit respek. Die verhoudings en optrede teenoor hulle metgeselle, is uit die hoogste rakke. Die manne raak rustiger en braai toe vir ons. Iemand sit n heerlike bak aartappelslaai op die tafel en almal kon eet. Dankie vir daai aartappelslaai. Die mans se sorgsaamheid en respek, is waardig. Henkie, dankie vir ons vleis braai en Frieda vir kos.

Nog meer in die agtergrond, die jeug. Gerhard se seun Gerhard, het sy skoene vasgestaan agter die kroeg om die seniors te bedien. Ek het al twee bartenders ontmoet en hulle input en harde werk, het my beindruck. Gewillige jong manne en 'n jong dame.

Die vroue was amazing. Elkeen stap haar eie pad in haar lewe. Een ding is seker, hulle stap dit met sekerheid, hartlikheid en vreugde ge-

PROGRAM

Time / Tyd	Activity / Aktiwiteit
08H30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoisting of Flags / Hys van Vlae • Coffee / Koffie
08h35 – 09h30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 61 Mech display open to view • 61 Meg uitstalling oop vir besigtiging
08h00-10h00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival of Members and guests • Aankoms van lede en gaste
10h30 – 10h35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans Form up / Veterane tree aan • Display of Banners / Vertoon van baniere
10h40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message / Boodskap: A.O. Lorraine Martin • The Last Post / Laaste Sinjaal • Parade Squad at attention • All veterans salute. • The Last Post is played. • Two Minutes Silence • Reveille is played. • Parade Squad Stand-at-Ease
11h00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laying of Crosses and Wreaths / Kranslegging • Presenting 61 triangles to family members of fallen soldiers
11h25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singing of National Anthem / Sing van Volkslied

PROGRAM

Time / Tyd	Activity / Aktiwiteit
11:30 – 12h15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion by Invited Speaker (Name to be announced later) / Praatjie deur Genooide Spreker (Naam om later bekend gemaak te word):• Well known Speaker / Baie bekende spreker• A BIG SURPRISE / GROOT VERASSING
12h15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refreshments / Verversings• Boerewors Rolls, Salads , Coffee, Tea
12h45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entertainment /
13h00- LATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social / Skouerskuur / Camping• Braai / Kroeg

meng met vrou wees. Eendrag maak mag. Elkeen in sy eie lewensbaan, maar vroue met vaste hande en menswees persoonlikhede.

Sondagoggend het ons rustig koffie gedrink en stuk stuk begin opruim. Die respek reel, om 'n ander se eiendom netjies agter te laat, was goed gehandhaaf. Flukse mense het kom help en vinnig was die plek opgeruim, netjies en skoon.

Hartlik dank aan die manne se galanterie teenoor ons vroue. Dankie vir die sorgvrye koppie koffie, vroegoggend op die gras. En julle pragtige stories om die vuur. Díe geselsies, is die kosbaarste.

Dankie Mostert vir my koffie, wat inspanning moes verg. Die diesel en dust was 'n wenner. Iemand het vir Mostert whiskey ge-

gee, as basis, hy moet nou daarmee vir Infanterie, eksperimenteer. Gun oil, klink na hulle nuwe naam as die resep werk.

Ons vertrek en daar is 'n wolkie van dankbaarheid in my hart : Dankie Here, vir die voorreg om hierdie manne en vroue te kon herontmoet. As buitestaander, sien ek uit na die volgende byeenkoms.

Hanlie





ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CLUB OMUTHIYA

1 Augustus 2024

The Annual General Meeting on 1 August 2024 at Club Omuthiya was a huge success with 60 members in the house. The following members was made Honorary Members as a token of gratitude for their contributions to the success of the club and their role of mentors. Piet Terblanche, Cassie Schoeman and Pieter Stapelberg (not present) were presented with a Club Omuthiya blaser badge. Congratulations is in order as we are grateful to have them as members of the club. Furthermore I would like to congratulate the new elected council members and wish them the best of luck for the year ahead.



61 Mech

battalion group veterans association



27 August 2024

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

During the AGM held on 17 Aug 2024, members resolved that:

- a. The AGM and Annual Memorial Service will be held separately. The AGM, administrative in nature will be convened within 60 days of the financial year end, and secondly the Memorial Service/s will still be held mid-August.
- b. The AGM will be held on an electronic platform (ZOOM or TEAMS) to allow members to attend from afar. Members also directed that where possible the AGM and a decentralized Skouerskuur should be scheduled back-to-back.
- c. To redefine the role and functions of the Board of Directors (BoD) and Executive Committee (EXCOM).
 - i. The BoD, barring the Chairperson (Patron) and Accounting Officer (Chief Financial Officer), to be non-executive directors. The purpose of the BoD is to provide oversight and guidance to the EXCOM.
 - ii. The EXCOM responsible for management and administration of the 61 Mech MVA, by planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the business of the MVA. The EXCOM is chaired by the Convenor/Chairperson (Chief Executive Officer) and six members, each responsible for a Functional Portfolio – Administration, Marketing, incl internal and external liaison (communication), Finances, Public Relations, including functional and regional sub-structures, Heritage and Ceremonial Matters, incl museums and memorabilia, Special Projects, incl tours, books compassion. The patron is an ex-officio member.

During the EXCOM Meeting held on 16 August 2024 the imperative to compose a Strategic Business Plan was confirmed.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

1. Management Approach. No formal management approach/style is implemented yet. For this cycle, the provisional approach will be based on the theories of Management by Objectives, Management of Exceptions and Project Management. The approach may be reviewed and reconsidered in future.
2. The SMP will be executed in three stages: Stage 1: Formulate the Goal Structure, Stage 2: Formulation of the Strategic Business Plan and Stage 3: Approval and Implementation.

STAGE 1: FORMULATE THE GOAL STRUCTURE

1. Phase 1. Environmental Scan.
 - a. Members of the EXCO in conjunction with functional and geographical sub-structures
 - i. Compile a written report including but not limited to current realities, strong and weak points, and

Patron: Brig Genl (Ret) Kobus Smit, SM, MMM • **Chairman:** Vet Manus Myburgh

Directors: Maj Genl (Ret) Johann Dippenaar, SD, SM, MMM • Maj Genl (Ret) Lawrence R. Smith, SM, MMM
Col (Ret) Jaap Steyn, MMM • Vet Manus Myburgh

planned activities for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30. Functional structures include amongst others the Riders, the Golfers, the Bikers, B Coy 1987, The Smoke shell Group, etc. Geographical structures include provincial and regional Vegspan structures.

- ii. Submit reports in editable format to the Secretariat by 7 October 2024.
- b. The Secretariat integrate the inputs into a single document and distribute the same to members of the EXCO by 11 October 2024

2. Phase 2: Composition of the SWOT Analysis and Formulation of Goals and Objectives.

- a. A EXCOM work session to be held on 19 October 2024.
- b. The hybrid work session to be held on the ZOOM Platform and EXCO members who are in Gauteng will convene at the Head Office of Business Print.
- c. The Agenda will include:
 - i. Item 1: Submission of Functional and Regional Reports.
 - ii. Item 2: Composition of SWOT.
 - iii. Item 3: Confirmation of Goal Structure

STAGE 2: FORMULATION

1. Phase 1. Development of Objectives and determination of financial requirements. 19 – 31 Oct. All.
2. Phase 2. Composition of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework. 1 – 8 Nov. CFO/CEO.
3. Phase 3. Allocation of Funds. During EXCO between 11-15 Nov
4. Phase 4: Review Objectives. 15 Nov 24 to 15 Jan 25

STAGE 3: APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Submission of Objectives for approval. During EXCO 18-22 Jan 24.
2. Approval
 - a. Approval of draft SBP and draft MTEF by EXCOM before 31 Jan 25.
 - b. Approval of SBP and MTEF by Members 3 May 25.
3. Implementation
 - a. Distribute draft SBP and draft MTEF to members by 15 Feb 2025.
 - b. Submission of Functional Performance against Plan (PaP) reports to EXCOM monthly from February 2025.
 - c. Disseminate quarterly PaP -monthly reports to members.
 - d. Submission of AFS for the previous FY and PaP to date for consideration by members during the AGM 3 May 2025.



Marius Myburgh
CHAIRMAN: 61 MECH VETERANS ASSOCIATION

VERJAARDAG WENSE / BIRTHDAY WISHES



Verjaarsdae vir die maand van September volgens die informasie beskikbaar op die 61 Meg se databasis.

Help asseblief om dit opgedateer te hou.

Die Vyftigers

Abraham Papier	1949-09-15	Wayne Leslie Rudman	1964-09-04
Tom (Bernard Thomas) Benn	1952-09-07	Eugene Liebenberg	1964-09-18
Andrew Thomas Loubser	1952-09-22	Frikkie Maritz	1964-09-23
Faan Gerber	1953-09-30	Willem Frederick Maritz	1964-09-23
Koos Liebenberg	1954-09-19	Edward Holcroft	1965-09-02
Sean McSweeney	1955-09-22	Gert van den Heever	1965-09-16
Dries van Jaarsveld	1956-09-24	Kowie van Niekerk	1965-09-17
Hendrik J.(Butch) Williamson	1957-09-12	Jan Adriaan Erasmus	1965-09-18
Camille Burger	1958-09-02	Johan van der Westhuizen	1965-09-18
Edgar Smith	1958-09-02	Kobus van der Walt	1965-09-21
Peter Alexander Le Roux	1958-09-06	Darren Boyes	1965-09-29
Lee Roger-Lund	1958-09-29	Paul Chinchen	1965-09-29
Steph van der Vyver	1958-09-30	Alfred Weise	1965-09-30
Donovan Webster	1959-09-05	Reinhold Gregorowski	1966-09-13
Harry van Zyl	1959-09-29	Madeleen Coetzee	1966-09-16

Die Sestigers

Chris Walls	1960-09-14	Deon Ferreira	1966-09-17
Martiens van der Merwe	1960-09-15	Eric Samuels	1967-09-05
Brian Davey	1960-09-16	Roderick van der Westhuizen	1967-09-10
Louis Herman Steyn	1960-09-18	Johan Kruger	1967-09-11
Kevin James Hyde	1960-09-20	Johan Kooij	1967-09-15
Eric Mijlof	1960-09-26	Chris Turner	1967-09-15
Pierre Riaan Ferreira	1961-09-01	Andre Herselman	1967-09-23
Christo Kruger	1961-09-01	Gerard Connolly	1967-09-28
Japie Maritz	1961-09-08	Craig Bush	1968-09-09
Craig Wessels	1961-09-14	Lodewikus Pretorius	1968-09-14
Lourens Theron	1961-09-16	Gert Agenbag	1968-09-17
Gerhard Potgieter	1961-09-17	Jannie Nieuwoudt	1968-09-23
Christopher Edward Bloomer	1961-09-20	Paul Fairfax Inman	1969-09-28
Willem van Wyk	1961-09-20	Thomas Stephanus Liebenberg	1969-09-30

Die Sewentigers

Niel Bruwer	1970-09-03
Leon Heyns	1970-09-09
Rassie Breytenbach	1970-09-16
Werner Smit	1970-09-27
Brendon Bircher	1972-09-20
Adriaan De Lange	1972-09-20
Pierre van Ryneveld	1972-09-29
Johann Nell	1972-09-30
John McIntyre	1973-09-12
Jaco Griesel	1974-09-14
Steve Peter Fleetwood	1974-09-16
John Barnard	1974-09-29
Petrus Gysbertus Nortje	1977-09-15



RECOVERY AFTER STORMS OF LIFE

This online self-investigation process started on 6 Aug and ends on 10 Sep. It is not a quick fix self-help program but a journey of recovery and self-enrichment in a safe space of group support.

THE PROCESS CONSISTS OF:

Self investigation work on your own.

Access to presentations on an online internet platform.

PDF presentations of self-investigation homework.

Zoom group discussions.

Feedback

Neill Bruwer ek uit die kursus geneem het, is dat ons as in-

Ek het onlangs die voorreg gehad om deel te dividue sterker uit die storms kan kom, as ons neem aan 'n kursus genaamd 'Storms van die bereid is om aan ons innerlike groei te werk Lewe', wat aangebied is deur 61 Meg. As 'n veter- en om die ondersteuning van ander te aanvaar. eraan het ek nie altyd die volle impak van my militêre ervaring op my lewe verstaan nie. Hi- Wat ek besonders waardeer het, was die manier erdie kursus het my die geleentheid gegee om waarop die kursus spesifiek aangepas was om diep na te dink oor die uitdagings waarmee ek rekening te hou met die unieke omstandighede gekonfronteer is en om nuwe perspektiewe te van veterane. Die fasilitateerders was kundig en verkry oor hoe om hierdie uitdagings te hanter. empaties, en hulle het verstaan hoe diep die ervarings van militêre diens in ons lewens in-

Vanaf die eerste sessie het ek gevoel dat ek in 'n veilige en ondersteunende omgewing was, om- ring deur mense wat soortgelyke ervarings en uitdagings het. Dit het my gehelp om te besef

dat ek nie alleen is in hierdie reis nie, en dat daar ander is wat dieselfde pad voor my geloop het en wat waardevolle insigte het om te deel.

Die kursus was nie net teoreties nie, maar praktiese en toepaslik op die alledaagse lewe. Dit het gefokus op hoe om die storms in die lewe te han- teer – of dit nou emosionele, geestelike, of praktiese uitdagings is. Ons het geleer hoe om deur moeilike tye te navigeer met 'n gevoel van hoop en doelgerigtheid. Een van die grootste lesse wat

Wat ek besonders waardeer het, was die manier waarop die kursus spesifiek aangepas was om rekening te hou met die unieke omstandighede van veterane. Die fasilitateerders was kundig en empaties, en hulle het verstaan hoe diep die ervarings van militêre diens in ons lewens in-

geweef is. Hulle het nie net leiding gegee nie, maar ook praktiese hulpmiddels voorsien om beter deur die storms van die lewe te navigeer.

Ek wil regtig ander oorlogsveterane aanmoedig om hierdie kursus te doen. Dit is 'n belegging in jou toekoms en die toekoms van jou gesin. Dit bied nie net insig in hoe om beter met jou omstandighede te werk nie, maar help jou ook om 'n sterker, meer veerkrachtige individu te word. Deur die kursus het ek besef dat ons sterk is, nie ondanks die storms wat ons in die gesig staar nie, maar juis as gevolg daarvan. Ons het die krag om deur te druk, en met die regte ondersteuning en gereedskap,

kan ons nie net oorleef nie, maar ook floreer.

Dankie aan 61 Meg vir hierdie ongeloof-like geleentheid. Ek sal altyd dankbaar wees vir die ervaring en die groei wat ek kon beleef. Ek hoop dat baie ander dieselfde pad sal loop en dat hulle dieselfde vreugde en heling sal vind as wat ek gevind het.

Tracey Bruwer

As the wife of a veteran, life can be both rewarding and challenging. The unique experiences and pressures that come with supporting a partner who has served in the military are something that many people may not fully understand. That's why I was incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the "Storms of Life" Self Help Course offered by 61 Meg. This course has been transformative, offering me tools and insights that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

The "Storms of Life" course was aptly named, as it was designed to help participants navigate the various storms that life inevitably brings. The course content was carefully curated to address the specific challenges faced by military families, particularly those that can arise in the lives of veterans and their spouses. From coping with anxiety and stress to improving communication and building resilience, each module of the course was a stepping stone toward a more empowered and balanced life.

As a wife of a veteran, I found the course particularly resonant. The military lifestyle often requires a level of adaptability and strength that can be overwhelming. The challenges don't end when service members return home; in many ways, they simply change shape. This course provided me with practical strategies to manage these challenges effectively, fostering a deeper understanding of my own needs and the needs of my partner.

One of the most valuable aspects of the "Storms of Life" course was the sense of community it fostered. Knowing that I was not alone in my

experiences was incredibly comforting. The shared stories, the discussions, and the mutual support among participants created a bond that was both healing and empowering. It reminded me that while the storms of life may be inevitable, we do not have to face them alone.

The course also emphasized the importance of self-care and personal growth. As spouses of veterans, it's easy to focus all our energy on supporting our partners, often at the expense of our own well-being. "Storms of Life" reminded me that taking care of myself is not only essential for my own health but also for the health of my relationship. The tools and techniques I learned have helped me to better manage stress, communicate more effectively, and approach challenges with a renewed sense of resilience.

I am deeply grateful to 61 Meg for providing this invaluable opportunity. Their commitment to supporting military families is evident in the quality and relevance of the course content. The "Storms of Life" course has had a profound impact on my life, equipping me with the skills and confidence to weather any storm that comes my way. In conclusion, the "Storms of Life" course through 61 Meg has been an incredible journey of self-discovery and empowerment. It has reminded me of the strength that lies within each of us and the importance of taking the time to nurture that strength. For any spouse of a veteran, this course is a beacon of hope and a guide through the storms we all face.

I would wholeheartedly encourage other wives of veterans to take part in this course. It offers a safe space to explore and address the unique challenges we face, while also providing practical solutions that can be implemented immediately. Whether you're struggling with the day-to-day stresses or seeking to deepen your understanding of your own journey, "Storms of Life" is a course that will not only support you but also inspire you to live your best life.

VOLTOOI DIE GEBREEKTE SIRKELS UIT JOU VERLEDE

Vertelling

Gert Minnaar

Ek en Jannie Nieuwoudt het met die 61 Meg Veteranevereniging se 2018 Angolatoer 'n plan gemaak om vir onsself, en ander ouens soos ons wat nie met ons eie karre, of saam met ander karre kon ry nie, ook 'n geleentheid te skep om die toer mee te maak. Die plan het daaruit bestaan dat ons met Martin Bremer geréel het, as ons 20 man so kan bymekaar maak, om twee overlanders met elk sitplek vir 10 man te huur terwyl Martin Bremer die logistiek met betrekking tot kos, slaapplek en vervoer hanteer teen 'n prys per kop vir hierdie span.

Met die eerste Angolatoer van 2009 het ons met een overlander die toer aangepak. Die manne op die toer in 2010 het ook so getoer. Omdat die overlander sulke groot vensters aan die kant het, het ons dit sommer gou-gou gedoop met die naam "Vistenk". In daardie Vistenk het ons 'n veilige ruimte gevind waar ons kon lag, gesels, terg, wonder, peins, bevraagteken, terugdink, vies raak, 'n traan pink maar bowenal ons harte met mekaar deel. Dit het weer in 2018 gebeur.

Roelf Schoeman noem Dinsdagaand met die eerste klas van sy huidige reeks Storms van die Lewe hoe sy ervaring in die Vistenks van 2018 sy lewe aangeraak het. Hy het gesê dat die manne se eerlike weerloosheid hom laat voel het asof hy op heilige grond is, en dit is inderdaad met daardie respek hoe ons mekaar se gevoelens hanteer het. Terwyl Roelf daaroor praat het hy sommer bewoë geraak. Ons ander Vistenkers in die klas wat in 2018 saam met Roelf was, het ook 'n knop in die keel gekry.

Die manne het in daardie skommelende voertuie, wat maar gesukkel het om by die voorste kolonne te bly, begin praat oor goed waaroor hulle nog nooit voorheen oor gepraat het nie. Een lid het reguit gesê dit is die eerste keer in 30 jaar dat hy oor sy ervaringe rondom Cuito Cuanavale en by Techipa kon praat. Dit sal nie 'n oordrywing wees om te sê ons kon onsself in die Vistenks, in die oggend met die eerste koffie, in die aand om die vuur, terwyl ons ry en tydens halteredrils, gesonde(er) praat en luster nie.

In die een Vistenk het die manne eers geworstel met die vraag oor wat Adam van voor het, wat Eva van agter het, en hulle kon die raaisel ontrafel. Maar hulle het ook hulle lewensverhale met mekaar gedeel - die seer, die soet en die suur sonder om doekies om te draai. Hulle het onder mekaar geréel dat hulle dit vir mekaar gaan vertel, en elkeen het 'n beurt gekry om sy storie te deel, met of sonder snot en trane.

Dit is interessant dat in die ander Vistenk die manne nie noodwendig so 'n rëleeling gemaak het om hulle lewensverhale te vertel nie, maar dit het spontaan gebeur dat hulle ook baie oor hulle lewens aan mekaar vertel het, ook met of sonder snot en trane. Killik Saaiman se storie in ligte luim oor sy volstruisboerdery sal ek nooit vergeet nie. Maak nie saak waaroor gepraat is nie, dit het moed gevat om so eerlik en kwesbaar te wees, veral wanneer dit diep emosies wakker gemaak het. Ek sê al vir jare ons mag maar voor ons Ratels huil, maar mens mag ook maar in of langs jou Vistenk huil...



The 61 Mech Veterans Association realised from the start the importance of getting our veterans together in a small safe space where they can reconnect, engage with each other, rekindle old and forge new friendships.

These get-togethers are known as skouerskure (shoulder rubs), and are not exclusively for 61 Mech veterans only. Military veterans from any other military veterans organisations are welcome to attend a skouerskure facilitated by the 61 Mech Veterans Association. In fact, Mike Beyl who used to host the skouerskure on the West Rand at one stage had a Russian military veteran who served in Angola as an interpreter during the Border War, as a guest at a skouerskure. This sense of inclusivity has its roots in the nature of 61 Mech Battalion as an integrated forces where mechanised infantry, armour and artillery seamlessly formed one new formidable force, with the other services like the signallers, engineers, MOT infantry and support staff.

The families of our 61 Mech veterans are not left behind. The wives, girlfriends, children and grandchildren are encouraged to attend the skouerskure with their 61 Mech veterans, and many families have benefited from this interaction where they are included.

The Moth is an important partner of the 61 Mech Veterans Association with its skouerskure activities. This engagement started when one of our members joined the Casa Mia shell hole in Centurion where Koos Moorcroft was the Old Bill at the time, where the first 61 Mech Veterans Association skouerskure was held. The Moth has the infrastructure with braai facilities and a cash bar, and we encourage our members to become part of their local shell holes too. Many a 61 Mech Veteran joined the Moth too and became Old Bills of their shell holes. However, the facilitator and members of each skouerskure in the different towns and cities decide for themselves which

is the best venue to host their skouerskure. The main purpose of the skouerskure remains to create a space where our 61 Mech veterans can, from the connection, growing friendship and interaction between them, find the freedom to open their hearts about any issue or matter they were not able to talk about before, and put the ghosts from the past to bed. This is also why we want our skouerskure facilitators to attend Dr Roelf Schoeman's Storms of Life course which deals with everyday issues we must face in our daily lives like facing reality, processing your losses, understanding and processing your emotions, forgiveness and shaping your life according to God's plan. These topics are issues which many of our veterans, who may have avoided it up to now, have to face now that they reached retirement age, and we want to help them find the right answers. If we find that there veterans who need more assistance than this, we have a network of professionals available to give such support.

These skouerskure are established in towns and cities over all the provinces, depending on the number of veterans living in those areas.

THE GOOD COMMANDER

Part 2

Roland de Vries

Responsibility of Command

The concepts of command responsibility, command authority, accountability, delegation, decentralisation and line and staff authority are well known. Within these parameters it is emphasised that the principle of command responsibility never changes. The commander is and remains responsible under all circumstances for the final successes or failures of his organisation. His staff and subordinate commanders assist him in the planning and conduct of operations and activities.

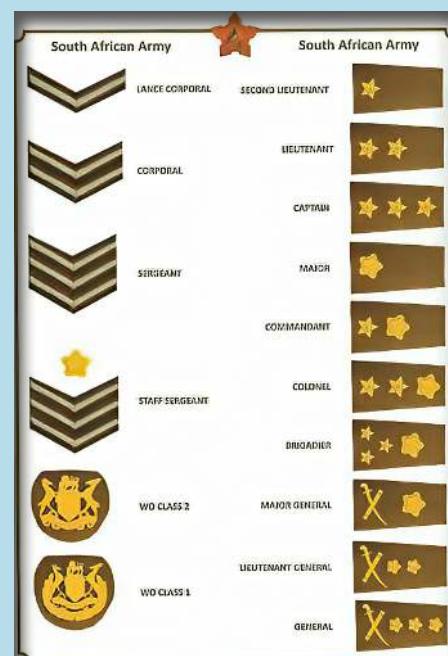
The final decision and final responsibility, however, is vested in the commander. For this reason, command is exercised primarily by delegating authority throughout the command channel. The commander is also aware that responsibility works in two directions. While he is responsible to his superiors for accomplishing a mission, he also has a responsibility to his subordinates. He must give the necessary direction, guidance and support, impose restrictions on planning and conduct and allocate resources.

The tempo of battle at times could prevent a commander from personally supervising and implementing all the various tasks. The demands on time and energy can be lessened by using staffs effectively. The principle of abiding by the command channel however applies throughout. Circumstances can justify a situation where the command channel has to be bypassed. In this situation commanders must be sufficiently flexible and sensitive. In such an event the command channel is restored as soon as possible and the intermediary commanders informed of the action.

As a result of an emergency or a change in circumstances it is often impractical or too risky to obey an original command. A subordinate commander must then have the freedom to work on his own initiative – it is the essence of

command initiative. If there is sufficient time, approval from the next commander is first obtained. If this is impractical sound judgment applies within the framework of a superior's policy, operational concept and original intentions.

Each commander determines his or her command philosophy and the policy applicable to his or her specific unit or formation. It begins with the promulgation of policy and standing operating and working procedures which the commander regards as essential, applicable, timeous and just. Policy directives are definitive for order and to ensure that routine matters are completed in a specified, prescribed manner.



This enables commanders and staffs to pay attention to more important tasks and operational matters. However, the good commander never takes the prerogative and initiative away from the next subordinate commander. The application of the commander's policy is given shape by means of command support, common training, war games, rehearsing of operations and debriefing and by undertaking command discussions openly - collaboration in this sense serves as a trigger for commitment and in unleashing creativity!

Critical Functions of Command

...go for simplicity...simplicity leads to efficiency...decrease unnecessary paperwork...use graphic and verbal orders and instructions...

Everyone knows the fundamental tasks of command, namely, planning, organising, leading and controlling. However, there are certain critical functions which commanders have to perform in order to be successful. The most important functions of command are: To be familiar with the situation; make decisions; give instructions; allocate resources and means; take the lead and direct operations; maintain, encourage and support personnel and forces; activate and motivate people; discipline them when required.

The commander activates and motivates his or her forces positively by his or her presence; through personal contact; by demonstrating personal courage and concern about the welfare of his or her people and satisfying their requirements honestly; composure under pressure and

in danger; decisiveness in issuing instructions; competence as a commander. The commander instils confidence and is the driving force in conducting and winning battles and achieving missions.

The commander is also aware that survival and success on the battlefield is based on rapid and flexible actions and reactions to changing circumstances, 'that a plan is a basis for change'. His or her force is prepared to conduct battles aggressively and at a quicker pace than the enemy, under the direst of circumstance.

Command in Front- The Position of the Commander in Battle

...I am at all times prepared for any eventuality...I have predicted what could possibly occur... The place of the commander on the battlefield...is in front...with his people...

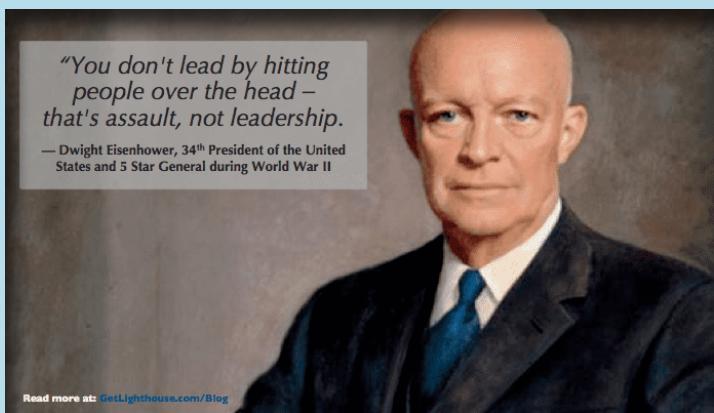
A distinguishing characteristic of a successful commander is to place himself or herself at the focus point, from where he or she can lead the operation by means of personal observation, feeling and leadership. This is called the 'command from the front' principle.

The position of the commander up to division level is on the battlefield. The commander places himself in the best position to control the battle, usually where he or she has good vision over the terrain as well as good communication. This position is usually close to the main battle force (centre of gravity). The commander must be able to hear, see, smell and feel what is happening all around – there is no substitute for personal impressions on the course of a battle.

Alternative Command

...It is a principle of command that provision must be made for alternative command at each command level...

Switching to alternative command takes place when a commander becomes a casualty, or when



he or she is no longer capable for any reason, to fulfil the command task. The second-in-command of an organisation is usually the designated person to take over command.

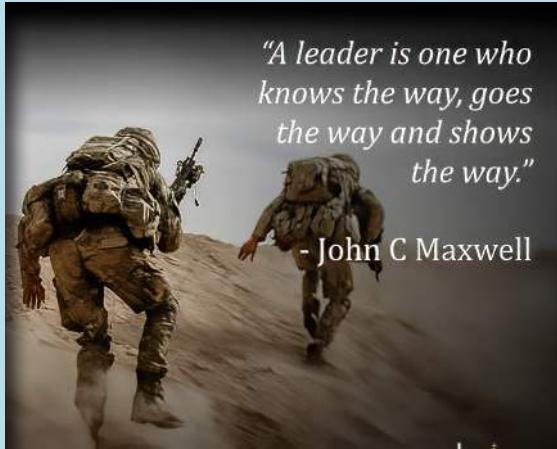
If an organisation does not have a second-in-command, a specific officer must be appointed for this purpose. In the case of formations, a subordinate HQ can be appointed for alternative command. The alternative commander must be capable of taking over command of the battle at any stage during an emergency.

Alternative command is promulgated in operational orders. The organisation's standing operating procedures should also make provision for the arrangements and procedures regarding alternative command. When there is a change-over to alternative command, the new commander must take over the communication network (command net) according to the organisation's laid-down procedures. Alternative commanding must be exercised.

The Styles of Commanders

Any command concept must be flexible enough to make provisions for a variety of command styles. Types of command styles can best be illustrated by a few examples:

- Commander A slaps one of his men between the shoulders and effortlessly swings himself into the turret of his command vehicle. He leads his people, with head and shoulders protruding above the turret, into battle – while his staffs continue handling the detailed aspects of the operation at a more stationary headquarters.



"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way."

- John C Maxwell

- Commander B quietly sits in her command vehicle in front of a battle map, aided by a variety of electronic aids and computers, whilst staff officers and orderlies stand ready to assist her. She carefully orchestrates and controls the movements of each unit and sub-unit in all seriousness, uniqueness and intensity, while her people in the front-line realises that she is ensuring that they receive the best chance of success.

- Commander C paces back and forth in deep thought, with his hands behind his back, at the critical stage of the battle. Suddenly he turns around and intuitively gives the command to employ the mobile reserve – meanwhile, each person under his command realises that he is a winner, that each decision he takes means success. Each person under his command spontaneously shares the responsibility to achieve the mission successfully.

Any of the above hypothetical characters can be a successful commander – however, he or she must be free to do what he or she thinks best and the system should accommodate them.

Styles of command, therefore, can differ, what is important, however, is that any commander must be able to make good decisions timeously and that his or her people respect them and follow confidently.

The Commander and His or Her Headquarters

A headquarters is important to a commander insofar it exercises an influence on him or her and the people they command. A commander has the right to demand two important things in particular from his or her headquarters, namely information; and advice.

Information covers a particularly wide spectrum: Own forces, the enemy, terrain, weather conditions, management information and others. The commander must establish and pass judgment and make decisions on this information. Furthermore, his or her headquarters must propose alternative courses of action

form which he or she can select and determine appropriate courses of action. It is essential to the forces under command that a headquarters can communicate the intentions and instructions from the commander to them quickly, effectively and accurately.

An effective headquarters in practice should not enjoy more advantages and comfort than the fighting troops – only that which is essential to perform the task effectively should be allowed. A headquarters must reflect a friendly atmosphere, not only internally, but also towards anyone visiting the headquarters. Do not keep people waiting; see to their needs and help them. Bear in mind that any headquarters is always under informal inspection and evaluation. A headquarters must be effective and come across as such.

There are clear instructions and policies on the organising of a headquarters: However, each commander organises his headquarters according to his own taste by varying the emphasis in certain fields.

It is not always possible for a commander to select his or her own staff. However, it is essential that, where possible, he or she exercises the correct choice. He or she does not necessarily select people who are like him or her, but those with varying attributes, so that characteristics and temperaments complement each other.

Do not fall into the trap of the ‘travelling circus’. Many commanders have the habit of taking their staff with them when they are transferred or promoted. This is wrong, since it can adversely affect and disturb the rhythm and continuity of the relevant previous headquar-

ters.

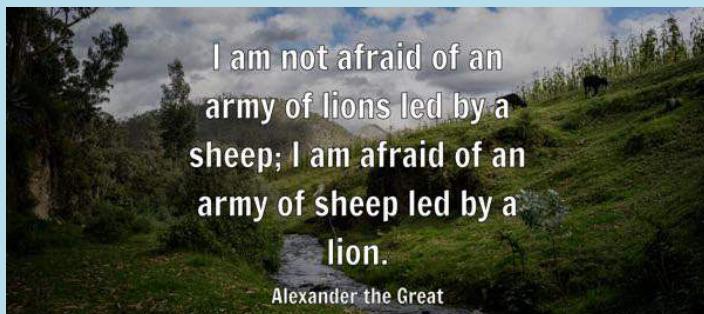
A headquarters must be kept lean and effective. It is the commander’s duty to rationalise or regularly make cuts in his headquarters. Growth of the organisation is an evil and must be restricted; otherwise headquarters become cumbersome, uninformed and useless. Every so often, prune your headquarters ruthlessly.

Contact between the Commander and his or her Command

It is not always possible for a commander to know all the people under his command personally (although this is ideal); however, it is extremely important that each person under command knows and recognises the commander. When the commander passes, people must be able to say, ‘There is our commander...I wonder what he is doing now...’ The commander must regularly show himself to his people and speak to them.

It is essential and right that a commander uses publicity on a sound basis for his or her own purposes. However, it is essential that he or she is known to all the people under command before making use of publicity. Ideally, he or she must first have a few successes behind his or her name and then publicity will take place naturally. The best way for a commander to become known to his people is to move amongst them and speak to them. A commander speaks to his people as a soldier, not as a politician. Soldiers have a feeling for truth and lies. If a commander does not respect the truth towards his command, he will bring about his own downfall.

Do not embark on witch-hunts. Many commanders wrongly believe that it is right to summarily dismiss someone who has made a mistake. Here is some good advice: When a person has failed or made a mistake, go and speak to him personally. A person is dismissed only when he or she frequently does stupid things, is negligent or cowardly – then the matter is firmly taken in hand and stated in no uncertain terms. If a person makes justified mistakes be-



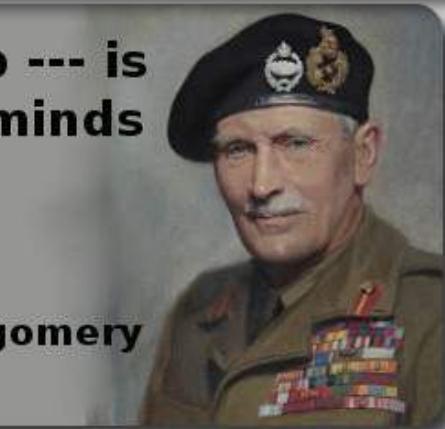
cause he or she was overzealous or over-eager, risked too much, or was argumentative, give him or her chance and if need be a subtle reprimand.

In this way, many people learn valuable lessons from their mistakes and mature in the process. Find out why, and do not be too hasty in getting rid of people – this can create fear and uncertainty in an organisation. When a commander dismisses someone, he or she must do so him or herself. Get the person to come to you, or go and see him or her personally. Do not leave it to others to do, or by sending a letter.

When a person is dismissed, he or she must be transferred as soon as possible from the command area. When a subordinate commander has to be reprimanded, the commander must do so him or herself. When it is done by letter, the commander must personally sign the letter.

**The beginning of leadership --- is
a battle for the hearts and minds
of men.**

Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery



IMPORTANT

61 Mech Veterans and Friends

The EXCO would like to keep you updated on our activities

Enable us to be able to do this

**SEND THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO:
MEMBERSHIP@61MECH.ORG.ZA**

Name

Contact number

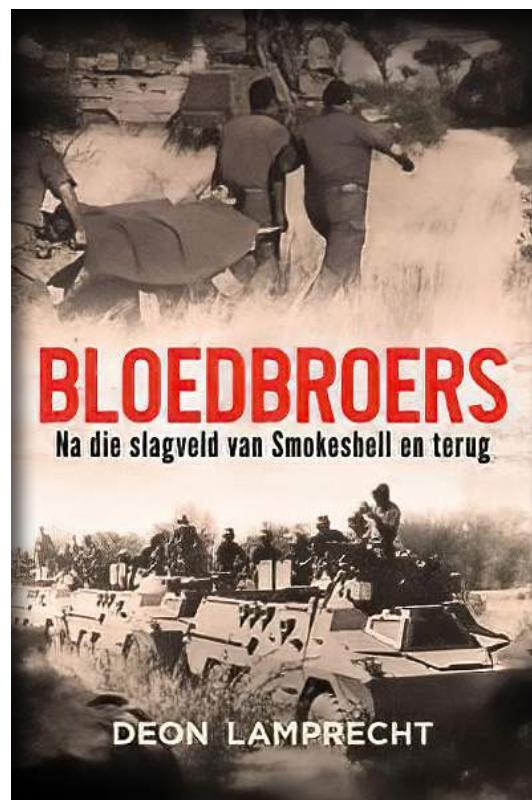
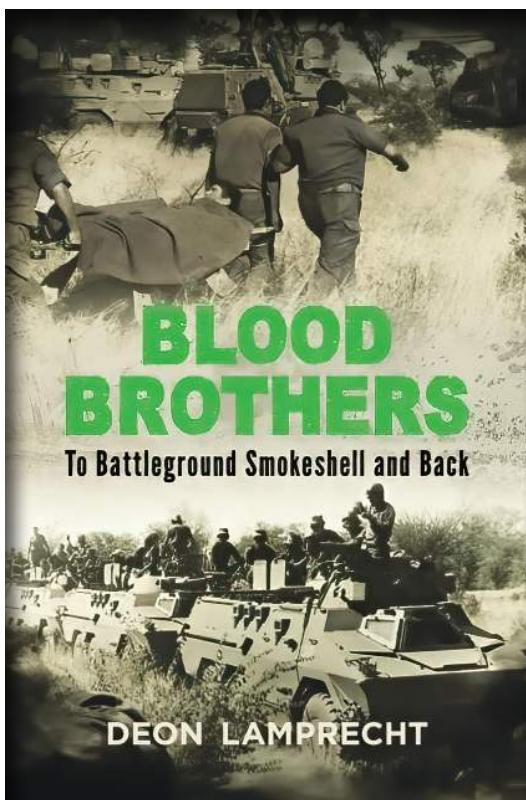
Residential town

Dates served in 61 Meg

Email address

Onthou om te Onthou

Deon Lamprecht besoek die **Suid- en Weskaap** om 'n bietjie weg te breek na sy skrywersmarathon met die publisering van die Boek - Bloedbroers/Bloodbrothers. Hy gaan by 'n 61 Skouerskuur in **Mosselbaai/George op die 28ste September** aandoen om bietjie oor sy boek te gesels en dan by ons op die **5de Oktober 2024**. Ons beplan om hierdie geleentheid in 'n tipe van Skouerskuur te doen om almal en alles te probeer akkommodeer rmet styl, sentraal , bekostigbaar, toeganklik, kort reisafstand ens. Die Toyota Stb-Woordfees vind ook gedurende daardie Tydperk plaas. Die saamkui-er sal by die Middelvlei Wynlandgoed buite Stellenbosch in hul proelokaal of Restaurant plaasvind. Monty het reeds met Ben Momberg kante gestamp en ek het gisteraand die datums van Deon ontvang. Versprei die woord en bring 'n vriend of Makker saam en kom ondersteun een van ons eie. Ek bring vir PJ Kappie Cloete en John Weber Wilson saam.... details sal volg. Dit sal vanaf 12h00 die Saterdagmiddag wees met 'n geleentheid om 'n wyn of twee te proe en iets ligs saam te eet by die restaurant. Boeke sal in Engels en Afrikaans beskikbaar wees en Deon sal dit kan teken. Bring jou Tannie Pompie se Oorlog, Die Brug of Bloedbroers saam vir 'n ondertekening of persoonlike Boodskap van Deon. Ons as 61MVV is baie bevoorreg om iemand van sy kaliber as makker en mede 61'er te hê wat ons stories so kan vertel. Dit is voorwaar iets besonders dat drie hoë kwaliteit boeke uit ons geledere in 'n kwessie van 8 jaar deur een skrywer oor 61 en sy mense gepubliseer kan word. Sien jou daar.



**SKOUERSKUUR
7 SEPTEMBER
COTTESLOE MOTH COTTAGES**

Almal, nie net 61 Meg Veterane wat aan die Wes Rand, Johannesburg Noord of Sentraal bly nie, is welkom om hierdie skouerskuur by te woon waar Dr Roelf Schoeman met ons kom gesels oor “Die hantering van verlies” in die konteks van die militêre veteraan.

Dit gaan ‘n bring en braai wees.

- Ons steek die vuur 12h00 aan en jy behoort teen 13h00 te kan begin braai
- Daar is ‘n kontantkroeg beskikbaar, en ons ondersteun die Moth graag vir die gebruik van hulle fasiliteite
- Jy is welkom om jou vrou of familie saam te bring
- Jy kan op hierdie event RSVP of per E-mail by gert.minnaar@icloud.com laat weet of jy, en hoeveel gaan bywoon. Ons wil weet hoeveel hout het ons nodig vir die kole.



MEMBERSHIP OF THE 61 MECH VETERANS ASSOCIATION

You can join the 61 Mech Veterans Association as a 61 Mech Veteran (full membership) if you are a bona fide military veteran who served with Combat Group Juliet or 61 Mechanised Battalion Group or took part in operations or exercises with 61 Mech, regardless of gender, race or creed over the period 1978 to 31 December 2005. A full member has the right to vote for the election of office bearers at national and lower echelon levels. He/she has the right to attend all parades and functions of the association.

You can join the 61 Mech Veterans Association as a 61 Mech Supporter if you did nor serve with Combat Group Juliet or 61 Mechanised Battalion Group, regardless of your state or country, as long as you subscribe to the aims and objectives of the association. This is also where friends, family and relatives of 61 Mech Supporters can join the association without having to be bona fide military veterans. Supporters of the association are entitled to attend all association parades, functions, and annual general meetings but do not have any rights to vote. They also get access to the 61 Mech member website to view the stories, photos and declassified military documents and may receive association correspondence.

If you want to join the 61 Mech Veterans Association for the first time click on this link, complete your details and make payment of your membership fees - <https://www.61mech.org.za/pages/subscribe>

Subscribe

	61 Mech Supporter	61 Mech Veteran
Subscription Fee (per annum)	R300.00	R300.00
	Subscribe	Subscribe
Subscription Fee (10 year membership)	R2,000.00	R2,000.00
	Subscribe	Subscribe